

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016
6:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Council President McCarthy called the Public Speaking Portion to order at 6:50 PM.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Martinez called roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Kathryn Bukovsky, Scott Burns
131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jack Banta
132nd District: M. Evette Brantley, Rev. John W. Olson
133rd District: Thomas McCarthy, Jeanette Herron
135th District: Richard Salter
136th District: Jose Casco
137th District: Milta Feliciano, Aidee Nieves
138th District: Anthony Paoletto
139th District: Eneida Martinez

A quorum was present.

Council Member Burns stated that Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was absent due to illness.

Council President McCarthy stated that Council Member Smith had a scheduling conflict, but may arrive later. He further stated that Council Member Lyons had an unforeseen personal matter to attend to, and would not be present.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016 AT 6:30 PM, IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

The following people have asked for permission to speak:

NAME

SUBJECT

Widlaine Lamb

856 Iranistan Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Skane School Roof in Desperate Need of Repair

Ms. Lamb came forward and stated that the Skane School is a public magnet preschool that specializes in special-needs children. She stated that the school is falling apart and is increasingly becoming a safety issue. Ms. Lamb stated that the roof has been in disrepair for 5 years, and repeated patching is doing little to curtail the pooling water, mold, and air quality issues that occur as a result. She stated that the parents have asked the school for information regarding the repair, but have received no response. Ms. Lamb displayed photos of the conditions, and stated that the children need their assistance. She stated that she attended the meeting to ensure that the issue receives proper attention, make the Council aware of the issue, and seek input regarding solutions. Additionally, Ms. Lamb identified Council Member Olson as the representative for the school's district.

Council President McCarthy asked that Ms. Lamb leave her contact information with Council Member Olson so that they may contact her.

Cecil C. Young

99 Carroll Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Matter Concerning Unjust Termination

Mr. Young came forward with a cardboard box. He stated that, while working as a young man, he would be called racial slurs and would be treated with the equivalent amount of respect.

Council President McCarthy asked that Mr. Young refrain from repeating the racial slur.

Mr. Young stated that as a taxpayer and homeowner in the City, he is angry, as well as sick and tired, of being treated with no respect throughout his fight against his unjust termination. Mr. Young stated that he has paid well over \$10,000 in attorney's fees and \$3,000 in advertising in order to call attention to his case. He further stated that he wants to be treated with the consideration and respect of a man, rather than the consideration and respect of someone called that aforementioned racial slur.

Council President McCarthy asked that Mr. Young refrain from repeating the racial slur.

Mr. Young stated that his job was terminated due to the fact he spoke out against children playing on contaminated sites in the City. He stated that he filed an information request, and has received no response. He further stated that the issue isn't about black and white, but rather right and wrong. Mr. Young specifically asked Council Member Holloway and Council Member Martinez to explain their behavior in regards to the matter, and stated that he deserves an answer to his query.

John Marshall Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Financial Governance- Taxpayer Watchdogs

Mr. Marshall Lee provided the following written statement:

President McCarthy, members of the City Council, and members of the public, especially taxpayers. Last month a major subject discussed was a resolution approving 'bond refunding' to save the City \$3 million in payments or principal and interest in the current year and \$3 million more in out years. It seems to be a smart tactic, one Bridgeport has used before, to lower repayment expense and to help reduce the current year's budget deficit.

Since then I have attempted to see all information provided to you by Finance and OPM Directors between the Budget and Appropriations Meeting on January 11th and January 19th City Council meeting, where, among other things, you authorized \$2,250,000 of bonding authorization for the purchase of police cars and equipment. I am still looking. The minutes that are available on the City website and subject to any corrections you made tonight at your postponed February B&A meeting are absent any details about the Police Fleet to be purchased. Has anyone received such information? For instance, the number of cars in the current City fleet. Age of cars? Mileage and operational state? The number of autos to be purchased, at to model, standard equipment, pricing, and staggering of purchases if not all done at once? Is this detail pertinent to determining the need and expenditure of \$2 million? Is it relevant? What does the City do with the existing fleet? What values can be recovered, if any? There is no record of such discussion.

My original concern had to do with why we are financing police cars (or any vehicles for that matter) over a 20 year bonding cycle when the City recognizes in its depreciation table that cars have a 3-5 year life. Should we be purchasing cars with a 3-5 year expectancy and paying for them in the same time period? Were we to buy \$2 million of cars at 3% interest and fully repay in 5 years, the interest expense is \$800,000, less than if we take 20 years to pay off the \$2 million at 3%. Do you, personally, buy cars with 20 years of financing? Do you know City taxpayers who do so? If you think the City can afford funding on that basis, will someone stand up and tell us why. It is nowhere in your January Committee or Board minutes. Did you fail to ask these important questions?

In that same January bonding request was a memo from David Kooris, OPED director, to Ken Flatto, Finance Director. One line jumped out at me:

Unknown to OPED, a large transfer out of our capital account was made in late 2015 that will hamper our ability to move these and other planned projects forwards.

1. Why and how can anyone access departmental capital accounts with a department director's knowledge? Without explanation?
2. Who can do any movement of funds without City Council review and approval of such a transfer? Was this a legal use of funds sourced from a bond? Has the City Attorney provided an opinion?
3. Who knows about this? Anyone present at this meeting tonight?

At the moment, the rumor trail tells me that the amount of funds that disappeared from OPED was around \$955,000. Other research indicates that a Port Authority \$900,000 mortgage was settled by a check to Construction Management Services. The Port Authority does not have a City departmental budget. The City Clerk office file only contains agendas with no minutes or financials. Subsequent inquiry indicates that Port Authority bylaws direct records to the City Clerk. My inquiry finds that there are no financial records or audits on Port Authority since 2008. So neither the City Council nor the public has any idea about what is going on. Your CC liaison has been active. But there is a problem you need to investigate further and report upon... different parts of City governance... moving money without authority or current approval... to pay what, to whom, for services occurring over an extended period of time? What is it that we do not know today but should know? Why is there such secrecy? Who will further investigate this serious breach? Are you concerned about the exercise of your City Council responsibilities and authority? Time will tell.

John Marshall Lee

Ethan Book
144 Coleman Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

A Plan for Minority Party Representation on the
City Council

Mr. Book did not attend the public speaking proceedings.

Clyde Nicholson
54 Wallace Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Taxes

Mr. Nicholson came forward and asked that the Mayor and the City Council be the first city in the United States to open their doors to the residents of Flint, Michigan. He stated that it is unacceptable that citizens of the United States do not have access to clean water. Mr. Nicholson stated that there are a number of empty homes as well as willing host families, and that

Bridgeport could accommodate up to 20,000 people. He stated that opening doors to refugees while American children are being poisoned is deplorable. He further stated that while federal politicians are playing the game, families are barely scraping by, and that the City Council, as the heart of local government, should be willing to assist. Mr. Nicholson stated that he will continue to press this issue, and that this unique, wonderful city should make this a time to extend kindness and assistance to their fellow man.

George Cruz

PSEG Coal Plant & Notifications

Mr. Cruz came forward and thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak. He stated that Mr. Young, who previously spoke, is devoted to his community and deserves answers to his questions and assistance.

Mr. Cruz stated that the plan he has been opposing regarding the PSEG Coal Plant has gone through, and that the citizens of Bridgeport did not receive a notification. He stated that he specifically texted Council Member Taylor-Moye for confirmation. Mr. Cruz stated that after the community expressed their objection, to have the Council move forward with the deal felt like a slap in the face. He further stated that the project is compromising the health and welfare of the public and that he will not stand idly by and allow it to happen without a fight.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President McCarthy adjourned the Public Speaking portion of the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Ramos

Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, Connecticut

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ganim called the meeting to order at 7:23 PM.

PRAYER

Mayor Ganim requested Council Member Olson lead those present in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Ganim requested Council Member Holloway lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Martinez called roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Kathryn Bukovsky, Scott Burns
131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jack Banta
132nd District: M. Evette Brantley, Rev. John W. Olson
133rd District: Thomas McCarthy, Jeanette Herron
135th District: Richard Salter, Mary McBride-Lee
136th District: Jose Casco
137th District: Milta Feliciano, Aidee Nieves
138th District: Anthony Paoletto
139th District: Eneida Martinez, James Holloway

Council President McCarthy stated that Council Member Smith had a scheduling conflict, but may arrive later. He then stated that Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia would not be present due to illness. Council President McCarthy further stated that Council Member Lyons had an unforeseen personal matter to attend to, and would not be present.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATIONS AND CITY COUNCIL CITATIONS

Mayoral Proclamation: In Recognition of the Get Healthy CT Coalition by Declaring February 2016 in the City of Bridgeport as “Know Your Numbers” Month to Increase Health Screening Awareness AND City Council Citation: In Recognition of the Get Healthy CT Coalition by Declaring February 2016 in the City of Bridgeport as “Know Your Numbers” Month to Increase Health Screening Awareness.

Mayor Ganim stated that it is crucial to know your numbers, and that he and Dr. Stallworth were invited to have their numbers checked by the Director of Health. He stated that this type of screening allows people to discover whether they are over or underweight, and allows them to check their blood pressure and cholesterol. Mayor Ganim further stated that going through the process illuminated the dangers of diabetes and cardiac issues.

Council President McCarthy extended his thanks to Bill Cowie and Kristin Dubay-Horton. He stated that they as Council Members should stand as examples, and show that screening is not a scary thing, but rather a positive way for citizens to make informed decisions about their health. He further stated that all members of the City Council were screened today.

Ms. Dubay-Horton came forward and thanked all of the health screening volunteers, as well as the City Council and Mayor. She stated that they screen between 800 and 1,000 people at soup kitchens and shelters during the year, which is followed up by health and nutrition advice. Ms. Dubay-Horton further thanked St. Vincent’s Hospital for their partnership.

Mr. Cowie echoed Ms. Dubay-Horton’s thanks, and stated that anything they can do to be proactive with the community’s health has an immeasurable impact on long-term care. He stated that they may never know how many lives they have impacted by offering screenings, and that the Council and administration’s support of the coalition is invaluable.

Mayor Ganim proclaimed that heart disease and diabetes are the top causes of hospitalization, particularly for people of color, and that knowledge is the core of prevention.

PUBLIC HEARING

08-15(A): Public Hearing RE: Disposition of City-Owned Property Located at 130 Clifford Street by Auction, Sale to Abutter or by Sale to Community-Based Housing Development Corporations

Mayor Ganim opened the public hearing on Item 08-15(A) and asked if anyone present would like to speak on the matter.

No present members of the public wished to speak on the matter.

Mayor Ganim asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the item. No one came forward. He then asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition. Hearing none, Mayor Ganim asked if any City Council members would like to speak.

Council Member Holloway stated, as there were no members of the public voicing support or objection, that they should approach the abutting property owner for purchase of the property.

Mayor Ganim closed the public hearing at 7:38 PM.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2016.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SALTER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO COMBINE AND REFER THOSE ITEMS DESIGNATED COMMUNICATIONS, ADDENDUM, AND RESOLUTIONS TO COMMITTEES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The following communications were referred to committee:

54-15 COMMUNICATION FROM TAX COLLECTOR RE: ASSIGNMENT OF TAX LIENS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

56-15 COMMUNICATION FROM LABOR RELATIONS RE: PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH NEW ENGLAND HEALTH CARE EMPLOYEES UNION, LOCAL 1199, CONCERNING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THEIR MEMBERSHIP, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

57-15 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: (REF #155-13) PROPOSED RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CITY'S AUTHORIZATION TO DISPOSE OF

PROPERTY FOR THE CHERRY STREET ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECTS, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

58-15 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD FOR A HEALTH START GRANT PROGRAM (PROJECT #16267), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

The following items on the addendum to the agenda were referred to committee:

59-15 COMMUNICATION FROM CITY ATTORNEY RE: PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION FROM NERISSA WHITTINGHAM, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

60-15 COMMUNICATION FROM LABOR RELATIONS AND BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION RE: PROPOSED AGREEMENT WITH AETNA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY IN REGARDS TO A GROUP LIFE, ACCIDENT, AND HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY FROM MAY 1, 2016 THROUGH APRIL 30, 2019, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

The following resolutions were referred to committee:

55-15 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) CASCO, CASTILLO AND MARTINEZ RE: REQUEST THAT THE INSTALLATION OF "SPEED BUMPS" OF SUFFICIENT HEIGHT AND DISTANCE BE PLACED ALONG CAPITOL AVENUE BETWEEN MAIN STREET AND LINDLEY STREET, REFERRED TO BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONS

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR)

***55-13 Contracts Committee Report RE: State Lobbying Services Agreement with Reynolds Strategy Group, LLC.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM *55-13 RE: CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: STATE LOBBYING SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH REYNOLDS STRATEGY GROUP, LLC.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES OF THE MEETING TO ALLOW THE REFERRAL OF AN UNLISTED ITEM.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO REFER ITEM 61-15 RE: PROPOSED CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES WITH JOSEPH L. GAUDET JR. TO THE CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (ITEM #61-15)**

Mayor Ganim stated that the next City Council meeting is scheduled during a time period where numerous Council Members will be out of town due to a conference. He stated that he conferred with Council President McCarthy and proposed that a special meeting take place two weeks from Monday, February 15th. Council President McCarthy stated that elections take place March 1st, and Mayor Ganim stated that they should schedule a meeting for the 29th of February to get it in prior to said elections.

Council Member Paoletto acknowledged Brian Roberts, a Boy Scout in attendance who is working to achieve his Eagle Badge, the requirements of which are an active presence in his troop, exemplifying the principles of Scout Law, and earning a total of 21 merit badges, among them a Citizenship in the Community badge. He further stated that it would be much appreciated if the Council Members could take a photo with him.

Council Member Martinez took a point of personal privilege to thank Mayor Ganim for the improvements he has made to the City, specifically his decision regarding the Chief of Police. She further stated that she has seen an improvement in quality of life and public safety, specifically in her district, and that the transition in the police department is a great step forward.

Council Member Martinez asked that the Council have a moment of silence for the Andrews family in Fairfield.

Council Member McBride-Lee took a point of personal privilege to thank the new administration for the positive changes they have made thus far. She further stated on February 27th at 5:00 PM, her group would like to give a citation to thank Mayor Ganim for said changes.

Council President McCarthy took a point of personal privilege to ask that the Council have a moment of silence for the the passing of Steve Ford, the deputy airport manager, who was a fixture for over 3 decades and cared tremendously about the community, as well as his position.

Council Member Olson took a point of personal privilege to acknowledge the remembrance of his mother being held in light of her birthday on February 29th. He stated that while she was born in 1896, as it was a leap year, she was only technically 28 years old when she passed.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Ramos
Telesco Secretarial Services